

Claims

1. A computer system (999), the system having a central
computer (900) and at least one peripheral computer
5 (901/902) for executing at least one business application
(201/202), the peripheral computer further issuing an alert
message (211/212) when a current value of a predetermined
variable in the business application is in a predetermined
relation to a reference value, the central computer for
10 receiving the alert message and, according to a predefined
type of the alert message, for forwarding a notification
message (301) to communication devices (903, 904, 905) that
present a representation of the notification message to a
predefined group of users (1, 2, 3);

15 in the computer system, the central computer issuing a
further notification message (321) to a further user (4)
outside the group in the event that during a predetermined
time period no user of the predefined group has confirmed
reception of the notification,

20 the computer system characterized in that
the predefined group of users is determined from a message
distribution list (140) that is derived from a role-to-user
assignment and/or from an application-to-role assignment,
wherein the assignments define the business application
25 that each user is allowed to access.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the communication device
(e.g., device 905) - when instructed by the user - returns
a receipt message (315) to the central computer (900).

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the communication device (903-904) is a device selected from a group comprising: fax machine, voice mail system, selective call receiver, a mobile phone with an SMS receiver, an audio device, a text-to-voice converter with a speaker, personal computer with electronic mail.
4. The system of claim 2, wherein the communication device presents the representation visually (953, 954, 955) or audible.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the communication device runs a browser program.
6. The system of claim 5, wherein the communication device presents the representation as a hyperlink (301-1) to a full version of the notification message.
7. The system of claim 1, wherein the central computer is implemented as a workplace application server (900') by that the users of the group interact with applications running on the at least one peripheral computer (901/902).
8. The system of claim 7, wherein the workplace application server (900') adds a follow-up suggestion (301-2) to the notification message, the description being selected from a look-up table.
9. The system of claim 1, wherein the central computer (900) assigns a unique identification number to the notification message, and wherein the communication device returns the identification number as part of the receipt message.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the communication device (903-905) also returns a user identification to the central computer (900).

5 11. The system of claim 10 wherein the central computer (900) stores the user identification.

10 12. The system of claim 1, wherein the further notification message has a descriptive portion (321-1) to indicate being the further notification.

13. The system of claim 1, wherein the notification message comprises predefined text portions (301-3, 301-4).

15 14. The system of claim 1, wherein the notification message comprises dynamically adapted text portions (301-3, 301-4) that relate to the business application (201) where the current value of the variable of the predetermined variable is in the predetermined relation to the reference value.

15. An alert notification method (400) for a central computer (900), the method comprising the following steps:

5 deriving (401) a group of users (1, 2, 3) from a role-to-user assignment and/or from an application-to-role assignment, the assignment defining at least one business application that each user is allowed to access;

10 storing (402) representations of the group of users (1, 2, 3) in a message distribution list (140) and to receive (403) subscription requests to alert notification messages from the users of the group;

15 receiving (420) an alert message (211/212) by the central computer (900), the alert message issued (410) by at least one peripheral computer (901/902) that executes the business application and that detects that a current value of a predetermined variable in the business application is in a predetermined relation to a reference value;

20 forwarding (430) a notification message (301) to a plurality of communication devices (903, 904, 905) that present (440) a representation of the notification to the group of users (1, 2, 3); and

25 issuing (460) a further notification message to a further user (4) outside the group in the event that during a predetermined time period (T) no user of the group has confirmed reception of the notification (301) by a receipt message (315).

30 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the subscription requests selectively add and remove representations of users to and from the distribution list.

17. A computer program product (100) with program instructions for a processor (910) in a central computer (900), the central computer coupled to at least a peripheral computer (901/902) that executes at least one business application (201/202), the peripheral computer issuing an alert message (211/212) when a current value of a predetermined variable in the business application is in a predetermined relation to a reference value, the central computer (900) for receiving the alert message, the computer program product characterized in that the program instructions cause the processor of the central computer to execute the following:

deriving(401) a group of users from a role-to-user assignment and from an application-to-role assignment, wherein the assignment defines the business application that each user is allowed to access;

storing (402) representations of the group of users in a message distribution list (140) and to receive (403) subscription requests to alert notification messages from the users of the group;

upon receiving (420) the alert message (211/212), forwarding (430) a notification message (301) to a plurality of communication devices (903, 904, 905) that present (440) a representation of the notification to the group of users (1, 2, 3); and

issuing (460) a further notification message to a further user (4) outside the group in the event that during a predetermined time period (T) no user of the group has confirmed reception of the notification (301) by a receipt message (315).

18. A computer-readable medium (970) encoded with program instructions for a processor (910) in a central computer (900), the central computer coupled to at least a peripheral computer (901/902) that executes at least one business application (201/202), the peripheral computer issuing an alert message (211/212) when a current value of a predetermined variable in the business application is in a predetermined relation to a reference value, the central computer for receiving the alert message, characterized in that the program instructions cause the processor (910) of the central computer (900) to execute the following steps: deriving (401) a group of users (1, 2, 3) from a role-to-user assignment and/or from an application-to-role assignment, wherein the assignment defines the business application that each user is allowed to access; storing (402) representations of the group of users in a message distribution list (140) and to receive (403) subscription requests to alert notification messages from the users of the group; upon receiving (420) the alert message (211/212), forwarding (430) a notification message (301) to a plurality of communication devices (903, 904, 905) that present (440) a representation of the notification to the group of users (1, 2, 3); and issuing (460) a further notification message to a further user (4) outside the group in the event that during a predetermined time period (T) no user of the group has confirmed reception of the notification (301) by a receipt message (315).

19. A program signal (980) embodying the computer program product (100) and the method (400) of any of the above claims.